

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1 1. A system for communicating information between a vehicle
2 and a device located in a house, the system comprising:

3 a vehicle appliance integrated in a vehicle, the vehicle appliance
4 having a Bluetooth® enabled communications module;

5 a garage located in the vicinity of the house, the garage having a
6 garage door opener mounted therein, the garage door opener having a Bluetooth®
7 enabled communications module and a transceiver, wherein the communications
8 module of the garage door opener and the communications module of the vehicle
9 appliance are operable to wirelessly communicate with one another when the vehicle
10 is located in the vicinity of the garage; and

11 a device located in the house, the device and the transceiver of the
12 garage door opener being operable to wirelessly communicate with one another;

13 wherein the vehicle appliance and the device wirelessly communicate
14 with one another via the communications module and the transceiver of the garage
15 door opener.

1 2. The system of claim 1 wherein:

2 the vehicle appliance includes a hands-free telephone system, wherein
3 the system further includes a Bluetooth® enabled cell phone operable to
4 communicate with the communications module of the vehicle appliance in order for
5 a driver of the vehicle to make a cell phone call using voice commands.

1 3. The system of claim 2 wherein:

2 the device and the cell phone wirelessly communicate with one
3 another via the communications module of the vehicle appliance and the
4 communications module and the transceiver of the garage door opener.

1 4. The system of claim 1 wherein:

2 the device is a personal computer.

1 5. The system of claim 4 wherein:

2 the personal computer is connected to the Internet.

1 6. The system of claim 5 wherein:

2 the personal computer wirelessly communicates with the vehicle
3 appliance via the communications module and the transceiver of the garage door
4 opener in order to transfer information from the Internet to the vehicle appliance.

1 7. The system of claim 6 wherein:

2 the vehicle appliance wirelessly communicates with the personal
3 computer via the communications module and the transceiver of the garage door
4 opener in order to access the Internet from the vehicle.

1 9. The system of claim 1 wherein:

2 the device is a home lighting device, wherein the vehicle appliance
3 wirelessly communicates with the communications module of the garage door opener
4 in order to transmit a home lighting device command to the home lighting device,
5 wherein the transceiver of the garage door opener wirelessly transmits the home
6 lighting device command to the home lighting device to control the operation of the
7 home lighting device in accordance with the command.

1 10. The system of claim 1 wherein:

2 the device is a home security device, wherein the vehicle appliance
3 wirelessly communicates with the communications module of the garage door opener
4 in order to transmit a home security device command to the home security device,
5 wherein the transceiver of the garage door opener wirelessly transmits the home
6 security device command to the home security device to control the operation of the
7 home security device in accordance with the command.

1 11. The system of claim 1 wherein:

2 the transceiver of the garage door opener is a Bluetooth® enabled
3 transceiver.

1 12. The system of claim 1 wherein:

2 the transceiver of the garage door opener is a wireless local area
3 network (LAN) transceiver.

1 13. A method for communicating information between a vehicle
2 having a vehicle appliance and a device located in a house, the method for use with
3 a garage door opener of a garage located in the vicinity of the house, the method
4 comprising:

5 providing the vehicle appliance with a Bluetooth® enabled
6 communications module;

7 providing the garage door opener with a Bluetooth® enabled
8 communications module and a transceiver, wherein the communications module of
9 the garage door opener and the communications module of the vehicle appliance are
10 operable to wirelessly communicate with one another when the vehicle is located in
11 the vicinity of the garage, wherein the device and the transceiver of the garage door
12 opener are operable to wirelessly communicate with one another;

13 parking the vehicle in the garage; and

14 wirelessly communicating information between the vehicle appliance
15 and the device via the communications module and the transceiver of the garage
16 door opener.

1 14. The method of claim 13 wherein the device is a personal
2 computer connected to the Internet, the method further comprising:

3 using the personal computer to access information from the Internet;
4 and

5 wirelessly communicating the accessed information from the personal
6 computer to the communications module of the vehicle appliance via the
7 communications module and the transceiver of the garage door opener.

1 15. The method of claim 13 wherein the accessed information
2 includes a custom vehicle horn sound, the method further comprising:

3 transmitting a command from the vehicle appliance to a horn of the
4 vehicle via a vehicle electrical bus in order to control the horn to blast sounds in
5 accordance with the custom vehicle horn sound.

1 16. The method of claim 13 wherein the accessed information
2 includes a custom turn signal sound, the method further comprising:
3 transmitting a command from the vehicle appliance to a speaker of
4 the vehicle via a vehicle electrical bus in order to control the speaker to output a
5 sound in accordance with the custom turn signal sound as a turn signal of the vehicle
6 operates.

1 17. The method of claim 13 wherein the device is a personal
2 computer connected to the Internet, the method further comprising:
3 wirelessly communicating information from the communications
4 module of the vehicle appliance to the personal computer via the communications
5 module and the transceiver of the garage door opener; and
6 using the personal computer to transfer the communicated information
7 to the Internet for access by a third party.

1 18. The method of claim 17 wherein:
2 the communicated information includes vehicle diagnostics and the
3 third party is a vehicle service dealer.

1 19. The method of claim 13 wherein the device includes a
2 personal computer connected to the Internet and a home security system, the method
3 further comprising:
4 transferring, from the vehicle appliance to the personal computer via
5 the Internet, a command to control the home security system;
6 wirelessly communicating the command from the personal computer
7 to the transceiver of the garage door opener; and
8 wirelessly communicating the command from the transceiver of the
9 garage door opener to the home security system in order to control the operation of
10 the home security system in accordance with the command.

1 20. The method of claim 13 wherein the device includes a
2 personal computer connected to the Internet and a home lighting system, the method
3 further comprising:
4 transferring, from the vehicle appliance to the personal computer via
5 the Internet, a command to control the home lighting system;
6 wirelessly communicating the command from the personal computer
7 to the transceiver of the garage door opener; and
8 wirelessly communicating the command from the transceiver of the
9 garage door opener to the home lighting system in order to control the operation of
10 the home lighting system in accordance with the command.